

ANTI-LUCRETIVS

OF

GOD and NATURE,

A

P O E M,

Written in *L A T I N*

By the Cardinal De P O L I G N A C:

Rendered into *E N G L I S H*

By the Translator of *P A R A D I S E L O S T*.

— *Affert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to Man.*

MILTON.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R I C H A R D M A N B Y,

M D C C L V I I .

ANTI-LUCRETIVS

GOD and MATTER

P O E M

By the Cardinal De POLIGNAC:

By the Translator of PARADISE LOST.

And justify the ways of God to Man.

LONDON:

D. MANNING



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM PITT,

Ennobled beyond Title by Essential Greatness;
By the United Powers of Sentiment and Elocution
Eminently Distinguished in the Senate;
In the High Station he lately adorned
Through Zeal for the Public, Abhorrence of Corruption,
Unrivalled Abilities, Unshaken Integrity,
The Delight, the Hope, the Confidence of his Country,
Ever Sollicitous for the General Welfare,
Studious to improve the Undivided Interests
Of our Benignest SOVEREIGN and his Affectionate Subjects;
Ever Actuated by the true Spirit of Religion,
In Uprightness, Fervency, Benevolence of Heart,
The Pure Worshipper of his GOD, the Sincere Friend of Mankind;
This Poem is dedicated
With the humblest Veneration of such excellent Virtue,
By his most devoted servant,
WILLIAM DOBSON.

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WILLIAM PITT,

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Through Zeal for the Public, Abstinence of Corruption,
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The Delight, the Hope, the Confidence of his Country,
Ever Sollicitous for the General Welfare,
Steadfast to improve the Undivided Interests
Of our benignest Sovereign and his Affectionate Subjects;
Ever Actuated by the true Spirit of Religion,
In Uprightness, Rectitude, Benevolence of Heart,
The pure Worshipper of his G O D, the sincere Friend of Mankind;

This Poem is dedicated
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P R E F A C E.

THE Editor of the Original has prefixed a large Preface to the Work. The whole of it would be disproportioned to the part only of the Poem we now publish, and the portico swell too large for the principal structure. At present therefore, as the Reader may be entertained with some Extracts from it, they are here inserted.

“ At last appears that excellent Poem of the Cardinal Polignac, so long the Expectation and ardent Desire of the whole literary republic. It is a known observation, that the eyes of mankind are universally turned on the offspring of great personages; they are curious in tracing the first efforts of their understandings, and attend to their minutest words and actions even in their earliest years. Hence, they are often propagated through the world, variously misrepresented, sometimes enhanced, and at others diminished. It is no wonder therefore, that this production of the Cardinal should

should be thus studiously attended to from its very infancy. Nor indeed could a Work, so long in the hands of so illustrious a Writer, pass in silence and obscurity: especially as the nature of the subject, and the extreme accuracy of the Author, demanded the counsel and opinion of the most learned in all nations, the most experienced professors of every art and science. To them if at any time he recited parts of this Poem, they penetrated so deeply into the minds of his hearers, and left so agreeable an impression, that they could not refrain from communicating to their friends (as far as they retained) what they themselves had so deservedly admired. Hence many eminent Writers transplanted from our Author some inestimable jewels to adorn their own performances: as it now became the distinguishing characteristic of polite Literature to be acquainted with Anti-Lucretius.

Thus in process of time it necessarily followed, that as many excellent beauties of this admiral Poem passed through numbers of hands, some stole into the world miserably mutilated, some as injuriously enlarged; while others were transmitted, crude, and indigested,

which

which the Author himself, on a maturer revival, judiciously improved. Those streams therefore, which crept forth through secret and unfaithful channels, thus tainted and corrupted, we now restore to their genuine perfection, and derive them from the fountain head in original purity.

It has ever been customary with the Editors of posthumous Writings to give some account of the Writer's Life; that, from the character of the Author, they may throw some lustre on his work, or from the work on the Author. But here it were superfluous. Let it suffice to observe, that amongst the infinite variety of the Cardinal's accomplishments, his attainments in poetry were by far the least conspicuous; and that his Poem is so excellent, that it wants not the support of his many noble achievements, as well in the political as the christian World, to recommend it to the public.

From the private conversations of the Learned, the fame of Anti-Lucretius soon reached the Court. All were instantly fired with an impatient desire of hearing, reading, transcribing. The most illustrious Princes, whose

whose least attention to engage was no small honour, were so wrapt in admiration of this excellent Poem, that from an elegant amusement of their leisure hours, it at length became the subject of their elaborate study. The Duke of *Main* translated the first Book into the *French* Language. And his serene Highness the Duke of *Burgundy* followed his example in many parts of the Poem: Born to wield the Scepter, he was proud to exercise himself with the weapons of Religion, thus presented to him from the Magazine of Anti-Lucretius.

It would be too tedious at present to give the reader our Editor's narration of the rise and progress of this Poem; what a series of time the Cardinal employed in this great undertaking; how it travelled with him through different countries; was his daily study, his nightly lucubration; still followed and attended him amidst crowds and in palaces, and more than divided his important hours with the concerns of all Europe, in which he was necessarily engaged, and negotiated with admirable judgment and sagacity. So zealous was he in the cause of Religion!—Yet one
Remark

Remark out of many I must beg leave to give the Reader from the Editor's Narration. He observes that our Author may possibly give offence to some of the scrupulous in that passage, where he accuses Epicurus of subverting the absurd worship of the pagan world.

Daring he trampled on Religion's name,
&c.

But here he is to be understood not to charge the Philosopher with prophaneness and impiety, for endeavouring to demolish the heathen altars; but that extirpating the only Religion then existing in Greece, without substituting any other in it's room, he aimed at the subversion of all worship of the Deity. This his meaning and intention he more particularly explains in the ninth book of his Poem.
---Thus far the Editor.

Let the Reader breathe a while, and then excuse the Translator for detaining him a few minutes with a short encomium on the excellence of this Work. In the opening of his Poem the Cardinal asserts the superiority of his subject, the high dignity of the cause he is engaged in: but with the politest address,
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compliments Lucretius with the ascendant he has over him in the elegance of his diction and harmony of numbers. Yet it must be confessed, that our Author has pressed close on the Roman Bard; and while he modestly apologizes for his defect in this particular, has transfused all his beauties, and happily displayed the same elegance of diction, the same harmony of numbers. He has indeed attained the summit of Poetry in blending so agreeably entertainment with utility. How aptly does he expose the folly of those men, who affecting to doubt of another world, indulge themselves in the false pleasures and trifling gratifications of a transitory, precarious, and unstable life, in its utmost length but of short duration, at the great and amazing hazard of Eternity; and at the same time demonstrates, that Religion and Virtue most effectually promote the happiness of mankind, even in this world, if there were no other! what a noble contrast does he draw between the narrow-minded wretches, who derive their existence from a concourse of atoms, who would contract it within this span of life, ignobly flattering themselves with the mean conceit of sinking into nothing;

nothing ; and those exalted souls, who deduce their original from an Almighty Creator, whose hopes are full of a glorious Immortality, still enlarging their ideas, still extending their views to an unmeasurable Eternity !

But I am expatiating too far (so pleasing is the field) beyond the bounds I prescribed myself.---Let me observe in a word, that our Author has interspersed, amidst the closest reasoning and most decisive arguments, all the imaginable ornaments and embellishments of Poetry : that this first Book may be received as a detached piece, and is in itself a complete Poem built on the moral plan, as illustrated, enforced and heightened by Religion. The subsequent parts contain a system of Philosophy ; in which the Translator has made some progress, with a design of offering them to the public, if this Essay is favourably received. He is too sensible, that much of the spirit of the sublime Original will evaporate in transposition ; that the Anti-Lucretian Sun will appear dim and obscure, as it were shorn of his beams, through the mist of this Translation..

A R G U M E N T.

THE Author proposes his subject, and invokes the divine Wisdom. He then exhorts Quintius (in the character of an Atheist) to dismiss all prejudice, and attend calmly and dispassionately to Reason.

Thence undertaking the defence of Religion in opposition to Pleasure; (1^o) he proves that Epicurus's plan for subverting Religion and cultivating Pleasure, is favourable only to Lust and Iniquity; but destructive to sound Morals, to human Society, to Virtue and Reason.

In answer to the Friends and Abettors of Epicurus, he shews that the Philosopher would place Virtue in Pleasure, not Pleasure in Virtue: and that, in destroying Religion, he destroys every Principle not of Virtue only, but of Truth itself.

He then refutes by the way Mr Hobbes's Opinion of the Origin of Justice, as calculated to support the Epicurean System: and demonstrates at once the absurdity and deceitfulness of Epicurus's Doctrine concerning Pleasure.

(2^o) He compares Religion with Pleasure, and proves that true Happiness is to be derived only from Religion, both in this Life and the next.

Pleasure thus defeated, he maintains it the Atheist's most important Interest, earnestly and impartially to enquire, Whether there be a God?

ANTI-LUCRETIUS

Of GOD and NATURE.

BOOK the First.

Of *Pleasure*.

GREAT and sublime the Argument I chuse,
Quintius, th' Almighty's praise. What name so high?

The sole Creator of this wondrous world;
The Sovereign Lord ! What Theme so justly claims,
Th' unwearied labour of the studious Mind ?
But ah, th' attempt, how bold to comprehend
In finite numbers Essence infinite,
Fountain of Essences ; in these his works
Part seen and part conceal'd. Celestial light
Dawns on the eye, with darkness intermix'd ;
A Sun, faint-glimm'ring thro' the envious cloud.

Hence the divided Sentiments of men ;
Whether by Fate's determined force they act,

Or by the guidance of supernal Law.

Some doubt (we see) not knowing why they doubt;

Yet fondly with no Sovereignty above

O'er earth presided, no tremendous Judge.

While some, by Epicurus' wiles betray'd,

The world's entire arbitrement commit

To fortune's sway, down-trampling every fear,

Of future state secure, or life or death.

Such the persuasive pow'r of impious Lust!

With these I war. The remnant of that crew

Rebellious, struggling for vain liberty,

Fain would I crush, their vaunted Bard disarm,

And win the Muses to the camp of Truth.

The Muses? airy sound and empty names!

Thee, Cause Supreme, thee, all-directing Rule,

Eternal Sapience, Reason, Virtue, Pow'r,

Thee, salutary Guide of erring life,

Light of the soul, Thee only I invoke.

O deign thy aid, thy Votary conduct

Thro' the laborious task. By Thee the world,

It's order'd course maintains: by thy blest beam

Things dark to mortal ken at length unveil'd

Appear,

Appear, and from their native shades emerge,
 Cherish'd by Thee, this fond desire innate
 Of sacred knowledge grew, this ardent thirst
 Insatiate, panting after truth. Inspire
 My song, and vindicate thy sovereign cause.

But Thou, whom giddy wantonness of youth,
 Or pleasure's rapid stream urg'd headlong on,
 Of curb impatient; or if genius wild,
 That oft affects to deviate from the safe,
 The beaten track, impell'd thee to disdain
 Virtue's mild yoke, and arrogantly smile
 At the dread hazard of Eternity;
 Desist, my Quintius; check the mad career.
 And o! reject not with averted eye
 The friendly light: thy mental faculties
 Exert; and every prejudice dispell'd,
 Weigh well the cause. Let Reason's equal hand
 Poise the just scale: and as that turns, incline.

Were mine the gift, as o'er the sacred clime
 Thy steps I guide, to pour Castalian streams
 Thro' the parch'd plain, the shaggy wild convert
 To bloomy verdure, and entice at once

All Aganippe's springs! But not from me
 Flows the rich eloquence that grac'd your Bard,
 The sweet, harmonious melody of song,
 He the fam'd Græcian dreams with ease transfus'd
 Thro' the free channel of his native tongue;
 While we, in language not our own, endite
 This hallow'd verse. Fair Venus, young Delight,
 And all the Graces charms, his numbers breathe:
 Ours, the strict tenets of severest truth;
 Harsh notes, unwelcome to the sensual ear.
 Amply to him her gaudiest treasure pours
 Luxuriant Nature, flow'rs of various hue;
 The vernal airs breath softer to his lyre;
 The skies around him milder beams diffuse:
 Look on the soil, the soil cool shades supplies;
 Down the green summits gurgling rivulets glide,
 And milky streams refresh the fertile plain.
 Sweet chaunt the chearful songsters of the air:
 In flow'ry pastures numerous flocks and herds
 Delighted roam: the flocks, the shepherds dance.
 The Cyprian Queen presides, and spreads her smiles.
 O'er earth, o'er ocean, and the ambient sky.

Thus

Thus sparkling with the Muses' airy froth
 Smile the delusive tales your bard deriv'd
 From the Cecropian springs: like the charm'd cup
 Circe presented her unwary guests,
 By wise Ulysses shun'd. Hence timely warn'd
 Let the raw Youth, whom vain Philosophy
 Allures, the sun-born nymph's dire presents wave;
 And, lest his godlike form he basely sink
 In sensual sty, among the brutes a brute,
 Spurn all her charms, and dare to be himself.
 God is our theme; his praise, our only song.

What if we yield in pow'r of eloquence
 And harmony of sound; in argument
 Thro' truth we conquer. Hear then and attend:

He, who first feign'd an idle race of gods,
 Shadows of deities, and sung of seeds
 Rude and discordant harmoniz'd by chance,
 Primæval atoms jumbled to a world,
 And man's immortal soul to death consign'd;
 Himself, devoid of shame, his scheme avow'd,
 Pleasure's audacious advocate and priest.
 He saw mankind beneath religion's yoke

Severely

Severely groaning, their desires restrain'd
 Thro' dread of Stygian darkness, and the roar
 Of Acheron; and if a glimm'ring dawn
 Of joy arose, soon damp'd with heavier woe,
 Aw'd by the gods, and fearful to offend.
 Then in kind pity to the hapless race
 Daring he trampled on Religion's name,
 And tore the sacred ensigns of her pow'r;
 From Phœbus wrench'd the pointed shafts, from Jove
 His thunderbolt; unloos'd the fatal yoke,
 And bad mankind their various wills pursue,
 Free from the fancied terrors of the grave.

But lest reproach should taint his recent plan,
 If mad licentiousness prevail'd, a curb
 Still he ordain'd to moderate their lusts;
 (So fame relates) and by mere nature led
 Ev'n to their pleasures certain bounds prescrib'd:
 Not as a foe to vice, or virtue's friend,
 For vice and virtue were to him but dreams.
 He fear'd, lest straining to th' extreme of joy
 Each labour'd nerve, sharp anguish might ensue,
 And discompose the soft Serene of bliss.

Or

Or passion's storms by fierce ambition rais'd,
 Th' impending terror of vindictive laws,
 Or Care, pursuing close the steps of guilt,
 Dash every joy, and poison all their sweets.

But the wild passions, once broke loose, to check
 Surpass'd his pow'r, or the slack'd reins recall.
 The pilot, when th' outrageous tempest roars,
 If once the helm he quit, in vain exhorts
 His mariners the swelling sails to furl:
 Vain all their art: precipitately drives
 The wand'ring bark, as winds and waves command.
 Or when a lofty mound with massy pride
 Hath long withstood the lashing surge's rage;
 At the first breach the torrent bursts it's way
 With rapid fury impetuous, uncontroll'd.
 Thus your deluded Chief, Heav'n's sacred awe
 Subverting, pav'd the fatal way to vice.
 And where's this boasted liberty of man?
 Chang'd are his lords indeed; and tyrant Lust
 Usurps the just supremacy of Heav'n.

For how shall justice sway, or moral rules
 Substist, if no superior pow'r preside

By stated laws to regulate mankind,
 T' inform the heart with principles innate,
 Or in their ear divine instructions pour,
 And teach them to distinguish right from wrong?
 Or vice from virtue how shall they discern,
 Where no criterion's fix'd, but vain opinion
 O'er human actions sits sole arbitress?
 Thus were all deeds, by man's mere judgment tried,
 Of praise or censure void; and 'twere the same
 To snatch a Sire from death, or 'midst a feign'd
 Embrace, plunge the dire poynard in his heart.
 Vain you confess the light which Nature yields,
 Dim and obscure. Hence Crimes in darkness veil'd,
 And hidden Virtues undistinguish'd pass;
 On the rude rabble's arbitrary breath
 Dependent both; and both an empty name.

Hapless the Youth, who from your fountain draws
 These pois'nous streams, by nature prone to vice,
 His blood rebellious boiling in his veins;
 Who rescued from the awe of pow'rs divine
 His sovereign boon a life voluptuous deems
 Indulgent to his lusts; thinks, Man shall be,

When

When hence departed, as he ne'er had been;
 That all is form'd by chance, by chance dissolv'd;
 Nought to be dreaded, while this vital air
 We draw, but sorrow and afflictive pain.

Shall ought restrain amid his wild career
 This headstrong youth, if mortal eye he 'scape,
 (Urg'd by his native fire and pleasure's charms)
 From rapes, adulteries, poison and the sword?
 For with fierce torrent where his passions drive,
 (Vain all thy caution, Epicurus) there,
 In that sole point concenter his desires.

Resolve me then, celestial Pow'rs remov'd,
 What should induce him to resist his will,
 And curb the strong emotions of his soul?

Shame? or the witness lodg'd within the breast?
 But sooth him with vain dreams of innocence,
 Whence shame, or whence remorse? Let goading cares
 Torment th' unrighteous breast. He rests secure,
 His conscience stifled with licentious joy.
 Aim'd not the efforts of thy subtle art
 To drown her friendly whispers, and erase
 The sacred records of th' heart-written law;

Left haply some disquietude attain
 The stream of joy, some anguish interrupt
 The sweet oblivion of a life to come?
 If then by nature's bent the lust of vice
 Predominate in Man, o'erwhelming shame
 And fear; and no superior Pow'r controll;
 Laws to transgress were laudable and just:
 To sin, a duty: not to sin, a crime.

Perhaps on Aristippus this you'll charge.
 Was Aristippus' doctrine worse than your's?
 The difference this: He openly profess'd
 Those baneful tenets, which Democritus,
 Which you with artful subtlety conceal.
 For if the sum of all, the end supreme
 Is, What delights me; and What checks desire,
 Torments the soul; why cease I to pursue
 The paths of lust by wedded love abhorr'd,
 Or Sinon's impious frauds, or revels lewd
 Of frantic Bacchus and his clamorous rout?
 For Pleasure bids me unreserv'd indulge
 The bent of genius: my desires restrain'd,
 Pain strait ensues, dire foe to human bliss.

Shall

Shall man's vain laws, the blasts of windy fame,
 The distant horrors of decrepit age,
 Dread of ideal maladies to come,
 Retard my course; or the stern censor's frown
 Indignant, whom the sportive youth derides,
 Frolic and blithe, rejoycing in his bloom?
 No: if the savage scene had pow'r to charm,
 My native city would I wrap in flames,
 And Nero's self out-vie: for Tyranny
 Still waits on Pleasure, her confederate friend.
 But Pleasure's rites the Wretch profanes, and well
 Deserves the thyrsus, who severely sway'd
 By rigor's gloomy lore from love and wine
 Refrains; and thro' th' extremes of heat and cold
 Laborious toils, vain conqu'ror of himself.

Hence need we wonder, that your sect should leave
 Their guide, and joyn the Cyrenæan herd,
 Mere rebels thro' obedience to your laws?
 If they believ'd the doctrines you maintain'd,
 How should they shun the paths you bid them shun?
 I ne'er (you answer) this intemperate course
 Prescrib'd; I counsell'd still to live serene,

And banish every passion from their soul,
 To live serene? Such life the Virtuous lead
 Untaught: the fetter'd slaves of sordid vice,
 Their ways to change, must many a pang endure.
 But you directed to a joyous life:
 And when long-struggling to subdue their lusts,
 No joy they find, to flattering delights,
 To wanton ease they fly, their sole resource;
 Taught by your maxims, that no distant dread
 Extends beyond the grave, whate'er they act;
 No future hope, however they abstain.

Pleasure for pleasure's sake should oft be shun'd,
 And grateful oft the craving appetite
 To conquer, you assert. Assertion true.
 But here your own fam'd axiom you confront:
 For you, for all your wanton tribe proclaim
 Joy the chief blessing, Sorrow curse of life.
 Resounds not, echoing thro' the Cyprian grove,
 This fav'rite voice? — How sinks your abject soul,
 Cross'd in the vain pursuit of fancied joy?
 Then to dispel your woe, whate'er allures
 The sense, you boldly claim: nor sacred Right

Nor

Nor Honour sways, while Pleasure holds the reins:
 If abstinence you praise, why style you me
 A wretch, who for religion's sake abstain?
 Since your vain conquest torturing pangs attend;
 Me mine delights. But if you dare not face
 Th' encounter, 'tis confess'd: wide stands the gate
 To lewdness, and to vice no bars remain.

Still they remain, you cry: The constant dread
 Of vengeful laws, and the long train of ills
 That impious lust thro' every stage attend.
 But once the terror of th' Almighty's arm
 Remov'd, what earthly fear can shake the soul?
 Shall I celestial pow'rs contemn, and shrink
 At human vengeance, and a mortal judge?
 Thus were I still entangled in the snare
 You vaunted to destroy: still fresh alarms
 Would haunt me, tho' from meaner springs deriv'd;
 Scarce from religion free'd, I now become
 My own dread censor; and enslav'd alike
 Wear as severe, but more ignoble chains.
 That Heav'n forbid! Is Pleasure sacrific'd?
 Be it to God. In sublunary things

Why

Why should the present to the future yield?
 Then grasp the pleasure of the current day,
 Or if the prospect of remoter joy
 Win thy regard, first prove it's excellence.
 For transient toys and momentary bliss
 To change, how vain and fruitless. Wiser thou,
 Purchase with life's short span Eternity.
 Say, will the prudent swain unwearied ply
 The cultur'd earth with oft-repeated toil,
 If she return him barely grain for grain?
 He asks large int'rest for th' entrusted seed,
 Luxuriant crops, his granaries to o'erflow.

Yet, Græcian sage, if this your servile fear
 Some may suffice, (who for a space perhaps
 With difficulty, and labour scarce command
 Short abstinence) yet can it ne'er inspire
 The love of virtue, nor extirpate vice.
 The love of thee, fair Virtue, far excels
 All dread of shame, imprisonment, or death.
 Vice worse than punishment the just abhor:
 E'en happiness with vice they dare disclaim,
 If such strange union could exist: not foes

To vicious deeds alone, the guilt they deem
 Alike, to will a crime, or to commit.
 Nought it avails t' abstain from sin, the branch
 Of lewd desire, and nurse the parent root.

Numerous the Vices by the sons of men
 Indulg'd, which 'scape the laws; yet not avow'd,
 Not uncondemn'd by you: for they bebase
 The heart, and in the villain sink the man;
 Tho' vengeance none attend, no tortures dire,
 No terror of the awe-clad magistrate.
 Such is the man, who renders ill for good,
 Heinous ingratitude! Or he, who pines
 With ranc'rous envy, when fair virtue thrives:
 Who dares his promise violate, or disclose
 Embosom'd secrets. Such the fordid churl,
 The false of tongue; th' ensnaring counsellor;
 The mean betrayer of unwitness'd trust.
 Such, who to gratify ambition's lust
 And thirst of glory, blast their neighbour's fame;
 Who wish, to swell their hoards, each parent's fate,
 A general dearth, and their whole country's ruin;
 Grudge to the hungry bread, oppress the fall'n,

Nor

Nor hear the widow's or the orphan's groans,
 And he, who rais'd to judgement's seat supreme,
 Thro' venal views the cause of right perverts,
 Impostor, and base-counterfeit of truth,
 Yet in these flagrant crimes the lawless wretch,
 Rid of the terrors of a vengeful God,
 Plunges secure, whom Pleasure to your camp
 Invites: for Pleasure solely he adores.

But grant the son of Pleasure to be mild,
 Friendly, benevolent, averse to infringe
 The sacred laws of sweet society
 Thro' avarice or ambition's sordid aim:
 Is this the influence of your discipline?
 Strange discipline, that joys alone prescribes,
 And bids indulge th' unbounded appetite
 Of wanton genius! No: 'tis the result
 Of a serene, unruffled, placid mind,
 The gift of nature, not the effect of art.
 The gentle lamb, that innocently feeds
 In spacious pastures, and permitted crops
 Each flow'ry shrub, yet claims no privilege
 The growling wolf of fierceness to arraign,

Nor

Nor the fell tigress of carnivorous rage:
 That mild, and these rapacious, Nature fram'd.
 Yet from the mild nought desperate we dread:
 But what from those, whom furious lust impels
 Thro' ev'ry vice, most rapid, when oppos'd?
 Like fiercest thirst by fev'rous fires inflam'd,
 Which the firm patient's hardiest fortitude
 Tames not, sooth'd only by refreshing draughts.

Theseus no rest enjoys, while Phædra's charms
 Transcending Ariadne's fire his soul
 With love incestuous; all disconsolate,
 'Till Phædra he possess, and violate
 His wedded contract. Hapless Ariadne!
 Ah! nought avails thee thro' the labyrinth's folds
 Safe to have guided the perfidious man:
 Nor can his vows, nor grateful recompence
 Due to such merit, quench his impious flame.
 Sharp pangs endures he, conscious of his guilt:
 What shall he do, resist the sweet desire?
 The sweet desire enjoyment best allays:
 Hence peace he gains; for Pleasure is his peace.
 These, Epicurus, are thy sentiments;

D

His

His scheme is thine: thro' interesting ties,
Thro' laws, he bursts his way; in foreign land
Leaves the deserted wretch, with outstretch'd arms,
And aking eyes, expiring on the shore.

Phædra no rest enjoys, since first she view'd
The brave Hippolitus; no peace admits,
'Till she subdue the youth's obdurate heart,
And win him to his father's injur'd bed.
Thus raves she, stung with lust. Must she then die
Despis'd, detested? yet not unreveng'd
She'll die. First bleeds the virtuous son.—Sad scene
Of impious guilt, wild frenzy, deep distress?
From one dire crime what various crimes ensue!

To arms, to arms, the Macedonian roars,
Born to bold enterprize; impatient, 'till
The world he conquer: and the conquer'd world
Contents him not. Go, bid the warrior rest
In Pella, and the Asian monarchs leave
In free enjoyment of their native realms:
Since Peace to thee, unhonor'd, humble Peace,
Is sweeter far than Glory's envied wreath,
With toil, with danger, and with bloodshed bought.

Lo!

Lo! what wild uproar 'mid the nations round
 One Roman rais'd; what ravage in the globe
 Cæsar's ambition wrought. At his sole nod
 What mighty tow'rs were shatter'd, what vast states
 Overturn'd! how ran with blood th' impurpled plains;
 When o'er fall'n Pompey with insulting pride
 He triumph'd, o'er his slaughter'd brethren triumph'd,
 His bleeding country's antient liberty!
 Bid Cæsar on the banks of Rubicon
 Inactive lie; or sit him down at Rome
 With his calm citizens, the sons of peace,
 In still repose. This answer both return:
 Rest then, if Rest's your Pleasure: our's is War,

Vain then and frivolous your boasted plea:

" In moderation is my sole delight;

" Gladly my neighbour's quiet as my own

" I'd cherish and preserve; with liberal arts

" Adorn my mind, and virtue cultivate,

" Superior to the soothing charms of sense."

Agreed.—Yet one desire impels not all;

You this way may incline, another that,

And various minds are turn'd by various wills:

Which if each mortal freely may pursue
 To lull his soul in indolence, secure
 Of an hereafter; What he wills, is right.
 Then as your Pleasure to the liberal arts
 Directs you, by mere impulse of the will,
 Thro' nature's kindness fortunately good;
 Mine, just alike, to every crime incites,
 By the same impulse sway'd; if nature me
 Form'd of more rude materials, prone to vice.
 Hence I deride whate'er of honesty
 Your Sect commends, if nought to me is good
 But what seems pleasant; or beyond this life
 No distant scene more blissful you propose.
 For that alone is pleasing to the sense,
 Which gratifies desire; and man's desire
 From native temper regularly springs,
 As from each various soil it's different seed.
 Thus do your rules direct me to obey
 My own heart's dictates, and not credit thine.

Last you'll subjoin: by fear tho' uncontroll'd,
 Yet by right reason Pleasure may be ruled;
 Pleasure not boisterous, not in the extreme

Delighting,

Delighting, but with humble mean content;
 Which free enjoying, Man his mortal days
 May pass serene in soft tranquillity,
 Like the rude nations who no God adore.
 But in your wild irregular device
 Where's reason's rectitude, who give to chance
 The mind's creation, and it's faculties?
 Things right we fairly deem, which constant rules
 Direct; where fluctuating chance prevails,
 What certainty subsists, what rectitude?
 The man unconscious of a law innate,
 Proud to deduce his origin from chance,
 Holds with right reason no society.
 Thus our conceptions were mere fortune all;
 And antient times might term things false, which we
 Truths uncontested grant; and stamp at will
 The mark of infamy on what is now
 Plac'd in the foremost rank of high esteem.
 Why boast you then this ordinance prescrib'd,
 Which ineffectual you confess and vain?

In China's land, beneath the orient sun,
 (By fame we're told) Some learned in the laws,

Of nobler talents and superior pow'rs,
 Virtue revere, with no regard to gain;
 And, with no servile dread of punishment,
 Extirpate vice. Yet with religion's ray
 Not un-enlighten'd, nor of sacred hope
 And fear devoid, is this fair moral scheme,
 This almost Stoic discipline. A rule
 Eternal clearly they confess, a plan
 Original of equity and truth,
 A kind of reason on the world impress'd,
 And laws immutable; from which to swerve,
 Tho' but a point, is crime enormous held,
 Irreparable breach.—But where's your rule,
 Your laws, your order, discipline; except
 What chance decrees, and chance-created minds?
 Pleasure with you is all solidity,
 All truth; imperious Pleasure stamps the mark
 On right and wrong: she dictates to the mind
 At will; and each man's lust becomes his god.
 Thus you restore the goddesses and gods,
 And fabled genii; by the self same chance
 With us (poor mortal souls) produc'd, I ween.

For

For what by nature's impulse man affects,
 That is his sovereign, all-subduing pow'r,
 Still more outrageous, as the more oppos'd.
 As when th' indignant tides with boist'rous rage
 Burst the strong mounds, o'er the Batavian plains
 Rushes th' impetuous torrent, wasting wide
 Man's labours, and the country round o'erwhelms.
 Vain are th' objected dams; th' outrageous foam
 Disdains resistance, and extends it's sway.
 Wise rests the peasant, 'till the waves retire
 Spontaneous; hush'd in peace the winds subside,
 Sunk is the deluge, and the fields emerge.

Admit we, that right reason you allow,
 And her invariable light ordain
 Your judgments and your morals certain rule;
 Sure you must grant some principle innate
 Director of free agency in man,
 Prior to Pleasure. And shall Pleasure dare
 Vain titles claim, man's arbitress and guide?
 Rather, if gentle reason's lenient pow'r
 Lend not her aid, the pest of human kind.
 Thus by heav'n's bounty Fire to man was giv'n.

For various use: his cold-benumbed limbs
 To cherish, and the absent sun supply
 Thro' the damp shades of night; his food prepare;
 The various juices of each plant extract;
 To lime, to glass convert the molten stone;
 And in the tort'ring furnace tam'd reduce
 The stubborn force of iron of massy gold.
 Yet if some hapless hand it's beam misguide,
 Strait blaze the rafter'd roofs: by the rude winds
 Born with wild fury the devouring flames
 Rage far and near: th' affrighted habitants
 Eye the contagious blast with sad dismay
 In fiery tempests driv'n; nor art avails,
 Nor mightiest strength, nor streaming engine's pow'r:
 Horror on every side, and loud lament.
 Down rush the temples; tow'rs on tow'rs descend,
 And the proud city lost in ashes lies.
 Thus unrein'd Pleasure wildly domineers
 Licentious, and the wanton world involves
 In frantic crimes: whom if you once submit
 To reason's yoke, all in a moment falls,
 Precipitate, your visionary plan.

Nor

Nor can you ought produce, but what before
 The thund'ring Academy roar'd aloud,
 The fam'd Lycæum, and the Portico.
 But if th' ascendant is to Pleasure giv'n,
 She rules o'er all, impatient of controll.
 Thus Reason, parent of each virtue, guide
 Of human life, in your inverting scheme
 Turns Slave to Pleasure, erst her Queen ordain'd.
 Go then, with varnish'd glosses vice disguise.

Some by Gassendi's influence warp'd, thus plead
 Your Epicurus' cause; that Pleasure none
 He craves, but what thro' virtue is acquir'd.
 Alas! too easy their unwary hearts,
 Unskill'd to penetrate his specious frauds.
 For what's the Virtue, what the Honesty
 Of this fam'd Græcian Sage, whom they extol
 So high, and crown with honours not his own?
 Is it a firm unshaken love of truth,
 Steady of purpose, resolutely good,
 Unaw'd by dangers, uneduc'd by charms,
 If soothing Pleasure's soft allurements smile,
 Or if the Tyrant's frown malignant low'rs?

No : 'tis th' indulgence of each worldly joy,
 Devoid of fear, anxiety or pain.
 Brave is that Virtue, worthy Cato's pride ;
 Thine Epicurus, delicate and soft,
 Bathing in blifs, in fenfual luxury.
 What in it's felf is excellent and fair,
 Delights you not: elfe would you ne'er depart
 Thus devious from the track, which Socrates,
 Or which divine Pythagoras purfued ;
 Nor would you fhun Religion's fabled paths.
 Pleafure not plac'd in virtue you maintain,
 But Virtue hold in Pleafure ; prone t' indulge
 Nature, not govern her with reafon's lore.
 Virtue you term, what's free from pain and toil.
 But Virtue none exifts, fave where the will
 Hear reafon's rein, the paffions wild to rule
 Ordain'd, and their rebellious rage fubdue.
 Then, as with fharper toil the palm is won,
 With brighter beams illuftrious Virtue fhines.

Whence is it then your Champion loudly boafte,
 That he firft taught at Athens wholefome laws
 With precepts upon precepts multiplied,

And

And to correct men's morals bent his thought;
 Virtue's chief friend; if what his voice extols,
 His practice ruins: lab'ring to remove
 All that has pow'r the passions to controul,
 Yet to indulge the passions still persuades?
 Not Vice, but her attendants, he detests;
 Vice in her self he loves, from fear exempt.
 Thus spurs he on in desperate career
 Youth, by mere nature's force too fiercely driv'n.
 Wants then such strong incitements human lust,
 To fly what's hateful, what desir'd, pursue?
 Would you by counsel men reclaim from vice,
 Why then attempt t' o'erthrow these sacred laws,
 More weighty, and momentous far than thine?
 For if the race, tho' subject to the dread
 Of heav'nly pow'rs, the Thunderer's angry bolt,
 And forked light'ning's flame, th' infernal gloom,
 And the dire terrors of eternal pains,
 Yet still transgress, and each corrupt their ways
 With various crimes: what if this Dread were none?
 Dire insolence the world would overwhelm,
 Rapine and murder their unbounded rage

Exert; and Man lament that he was born.

Were you with ardent love of Virtue fir'd,
 And did you thirst for Equity and Truth,
 Why should Religion's sacred laws offend?
 She's too severe. Severe she is to those
 Whom Vice delights, but not to Virtue's friends.
 For Vice then, Epicurus, you contriv'd
 A friendly refuge, to each Miscreant kind,
 Each perjur'd wretch. Hence to your banners hie
 In droves, the dregs and outcast of mankind.
 Hence are you stiled th' Assertor of the base,
 Patron of villains; whom you thus supply
 With impious courage and ignoble arms.
 For that degenerate fear, you boast to quell,
 Damps not the Virtuous; whose ingenuous deeds
 Becalm their minds, and chaste integrity
 Wraps in soft peace, unconscious of alarms.
 From these far distant, hiss and clash their thongs
 The snake-curl'd Furies; distant far from these
 Burn the relentless flames that never die.

Call me declaimer, Quintius; I'm content.
 Still I'll exclude all rectitude and truth

From

From Epicurus' scheme; nor him permit
 To prostitute fair Virtue's sacred name.
 Say too, I loaded with opprobrious terms
 The laughing tribe.—Himself th' inglorious brand
 Fix'd on himself, when he presum'd t' expel
 Law and it's sovereign Author from the world;
 And Reason's light attribute to the wild
 Assemblage of blind atoms wrought by chance.
 For what is right? that, which by stated rules
 Is fix'd. What just? That which the law ordains.
 Then without law, nought just; and rule exempt,
 Nought right: thus Reason, Virtue are no more.
 But heav'nly Pow'rs remov'd, nor law nor rule
 Remains: farewell for ever Just and Right!
 Virtue's a phantom; Reason, Fortune's child.
 Come, Epicurus, come; withdraw the mask,
 Th' ungenerous mask; and, what thou art, appear.

But know, while innate reason from the mind
 You strive t' expel, while justice you proscribe;
 Truth also, their inseparable friend,
 You drive. For Reason's salutary pow'r
 Serves not our actions only to conduct;

External

External objects she distinctly views
 With clear discernment and unerring care.
 Where doubts arise, she's mute; till certain light
 Dispel th' unfriendly shade: when light appears,
 It's radiant presence boldly she asserts,
 Sure of her judgment, and she judges right.
 For were her medium false, the treach'rous rays
 Still would mislead the ever-wand'ring mind,
 Fatal as darkness self; no certainty
 Would beam on man: and all that we discourse
 Of truth, were babling vain, and empty sound,
 The sport of winds. Whate'er then we discern
 By Reason's faithful and perspicuous light,
 Is solid, clear, uncontroverted truth.
 But if the mind, if reason you derive
 From flutt'ring atoms harmoniz'd by chance,
 Whence will you prove, what you ascertain, true?
 That may be wav'ring chance, which truth you deem
 Strange concurrence and assemblages be form'd
 Of the mind's elements, to represent
 Each object in a false and alien light.
 Thus what to you seem'd manifest and clear,

Still

Still as more clear, were wider still from truth :
 Then all you think, and all you prove, is vain.
 Now that the Whole is greater than it's Part
 Mankind agree: perhaps 'tis less; perhaps,
 Spight of arithmetic, twice four are nine.
 Who, while he thinks, can doubt, that he exists?
 Yet what forbids but that we err in this?
 For, Reason's rule remov'd, all light's extinct.
 Hence, by your principles, as nought is just,
 Nought can be true. Thy sword, which Pyrrho stabs,
 That very sword now turns it's point on thee.

But in support of his expiring friend
 See Hobbs appear. He strenuously denies
 That justice is reveal'd by law innate;
 But that her origine she owes to art.
 When first mankind, for private int'rest born,
 The friends and lovers of themselves alone,
 Feuds and alternate discord to foment
 Began, and live on rapine, waste, and spoil;
 Then (says this champion) left rude violence
 The clashing world destroy; that wedded pair,
 That sons and fathers, brethren, citizens,

Might

Might live in harmony and bonds of peace;
 Prudence, attentive to the publick good,
 Some certain laws ordain'd : which to obey
 The joynt advantage of each various branch
 First (tho' reluctant) drove, coercive fear,
 And sad experience of repeated woes.
 This then, in Hobbs' and Epicurus' scheme,
 Of justice and religion This the source.

Who thus of justice and religion dares
 These unattested falsities profane
 Aver, his impious enmity declares.
 What proves he more? And shall the baneful fraud
 Lurk undisclos'd?—Her source if she deriv'd
 From fordid int'rest, Virtue's sacred name
 Would sink degraded, and her glories fade.
 Yet hence glad triumph I presage, hence draw
 Sure pledge of victory in Virtue's cause.
 Since without justice and religion's aid
 Mankind he owns their mad licentiousness
 Ne'er can restrain, clear is the consequence,
 That to their antient crimes they strait return.

Might

Here,

Here, but the order I pursue forbids,
 Would I forthwith evince th' heart-written law,
 And justice shew by Reason's light display'd,
 E'er human laws prevail'd, or Tribunes first
 Their edicts issued, Senates their decrees.
 Nature I'd prove the sovereign arbitress
 Of Just and Right.—Digression to avoid,
 This let me now assert: if Good and Ill
 Had no existence, 'till the laws of man
 Prevail'd, then Justice has no native pow'r,
 But blind Caprice all law establishes;
 Which who confess, tyrannic pow'r obey.
 For since the laws on man's sole will depend,
 What's now forbidden, might have been enjoyn'd,
 And what is now enjoyn'd, prohibited.

Thus then the general Good, on which alone
 Subsists th' Hobbefian plan, his idle dreams
 Refutes; by his own argument he falls.
 For if the general Good engender'd laws,
 Then 'tis confess'd some Good on earth appear'd,
 Or ever there was law. Hence we discern
 A clear essential diff'rence in things.

See how blind error thro' perplexing paths
 Drives the vain Reasoner! If from laws alone
 Just and Unjust proceed, the fatal steel
 To plunge in the bare breast of innocence
 Were a less heinous crime, than violate
 Our plighted faith: since murderous ruffian acts
 Are mark'd then only with the stamp of guilt,
 When the free race by mutual league have sworn
 Unfeign'd obedience to restrictive laws.

But while they plead necessity of laws,
 (Left crimes outrageous man's ungovern'd race
 Drive headlong, or self-love the world o'erthrow)
 Pleasure's destructive influence they confess,
 Whence lust proceeds, dread source of villany.
 But Quintius, what propos'd this verse to prove?
 That, if Lucretius' impious doctrines sway'd,
 Vice, torrent Vice, would deluge all mankind.
 As when th' sovereign Monarch of the world
 Permits the blustering winds to range at will
 Licentious; forth they rush, the foamy deep
 Upturn, and lashing the sonorous waves,
 Spread ghastly terrors o'er th' affrighted main.

With

With thund'ring roar, and sea and air confound.
 Thus Vice the world o'erwhelms, while Pleasure reigns
 With lawless sway, of heav'n and hell secure.

Say, were there found a land, exempt from law,
 From Prince or Potentate, free as you'd wish
 The world, of all celestial terror clear;
 Where no reward awaited virtuous deeds,
 No vengeance, crimes pursued; nor e'en the names
 Of Vice or Virtue known; but each man reign'd
 Lord of himself and God: Would you that land
 Gladly inhabit?—Let Spinoza's crew
 Dwell there; there Epicurus' herd reside.
 Yet such the boon your vaunted Græcian brought
 Mankind, such gifts bestow'd; pernicious gifts!
 Is this the Wisdom hymn'd by tuneful bards,
 By fame's loud trump proclaim'd? Is this the Man,
 Whom nor Alcides, tho' the world he purg'd
 Of monsters, nor the Patroness who chang'd
 Primæval acorns for the fruitful grain,
 Nor the vine-planting Sire, nor Progeny
 Of fair Apollo (at whose presence fled
 Each dire Disease, and vanquish'd Death retir'd)

Equal'd in merit, in kind benefits
 Befriending man?—Goodness unparallel'd,
 To sooth the impious in their fav'rite crimes,
 And rife Virtue of her just reward!

Baneful this doctrine therefore and malign
 To social commerce: for no benefit
 Confers he on mankind, not e'en the boon
 He boasts so specious; since the profer'd joys,
 Obvious themselves, need no director's aid.
 As flatt'ring Alchymists for solid ore
 Give airy smoke, and feed the greedy soul
 With hopes delusive; while each gaping churl,
 Fond of imagin'd wealth, his real stores
 Exhausts, the substance bart'ring for a shade.
 Such those, who list to Epicurus' wiles.
 The Virtues, man's chief ornament, the seeds
 Of Equity, best treasure of the mind,
 Love of their brethren and their God, for vain
 Amusements they exchange; which who pursues
 Intent, gains little, and has nought t' impart.
 For your lov'd Bard this counsel oft repeats,
 Your own dear int'rest to consult, all else

Relinquishing:

Relinquishing: and thus the Græcian sage
 His sect exhorted ne'er to interrupt
 With fruitless cares the fleeting hours of life,
 With vain incumbrances of social ties,
 On private or on public duties bent,
 Sunk with sad sorrow for the Wretch distress'd
 Or drooping o'er the funeral of a friend.
 Thus warn'd he, that the Wise, all woe to shun,
 His soul in languid indolence secure,
 Cold, and of all regardless, kinsmen, friends,
 His parent's welfare, or his country's good,
 Lost to the world, and alien to mankind.
 Still his own peace assiduously maintain,
 Nor further commerce hold, than what might swell
 His coffers, or his happiness advance,
 Self-satisfied, and wrap'd in self alone.
 Nor from this law e'en Pleasure he exempts.
 For, ever warm in liberty's defence,
 (Stript of whose charms nought amiable appears,
 Sweet or endearing) with strain'd eloquence
 Your Sage attempts to shew, what pointed thorns,
 What anguish lurks beneath mellifluous flow'rs

Too

Too ardently embrac'd : hence to chaste love
 Prefers wide-wand'ring and licentious lust.
 Such the blind wisdom of the sluggish tribe !

But They, whose breast Religion's sacred love
 Warms with a steady and unvarying flame,
 Nor toil humane, nor friendly cares refuse
 Nor strict attendance to the public weal ;
 But on their kindred and their country spend
 Their generous efforts ; nor to friends alone
 Benevolent, their free and ample souls
 At once embrace the distant and th' unknown.
 Nor yet content with sympathy of grief,
 They by their actions testify their hearts,
 Support th' oppressed, the destitute relieve ;
 Proud to avow the sweet endearing ties,
 Which Nature fram'd to harmonize mankind.
 Camps too and courts of law they oft attend
 With zealous fervency, in Honour's cause,
 Yet calm within : Foes to iniquity,
 Nought they atchieve, but Reason's voice approves,
 Prompts and enjoins : nought virtuous leave undone ;
 For Piety, unerring guide, informs

What

What first their God requires, what Conscience next
 God's umpire in the human breast, and what
 The various bonds of social life demand!
 Whate'er your dreams suggest, Religion trains
 A race of Heroes, generous Worthies, fir'd
 With nobler motives than the thirst of gold,
 Hope of uncertain praise and airy fame,
 Or lust of honours, which th' insatiate soul
 Ever torment, and plunge too oft in Vice.
 But Piety nought deviating from right
 Persuades, regarding Equity alone.
 Say, which best serves the interest of mankind,
 Your Græcian, whose sole law, whose sovereign pow'r
 Is Pleasure; or the Man, who God adores?

But since nor force, nor custom's prevalence,
 Nor variable chance, nor written law,
 But nature's instinct prompts us to embrace
 That which promotes our several int'rests best;
 (This you'll confess at least in man innate)
 Hence what's most useful and salubrious found,
 Whether the sense it flatter or disgust,
 That to all else should still superior rise.

Then

Then if to man more useful nought is found
 Than pure Religion's calm pacific laws,
 Nor ought than Epicurus' fictions worse,
 (Both which are evidently prov'd) reign thou,
 Religion, and the paths of life direct.
 Thro' thy blest influence the filial tribe
 Inflam'd, their parents honour and revere,
 Servants their lords, and subjects kings obey;
 Thence to the subject, link'd by mutual ties,
 Descends the sovereign's paternal love.
 Hence 'stablish'd government, and constant peace.
 For He, whose heart the living God adores,
 Himself confesses of the general whole,
 A part; if others service he demand,
 To them alternate benefits repays.
 But in your scheme what's safe? where lust usurps
 The pow'r of justice, piety is scoff'd
 Virtue degraded, native law destroy'd;
 Which who contemns, with the fell lion ranks
 And rav'nous tiger, foe to social life.
 For, in himself enthron'd, and to himself
 Referring all, tho' but of millions one,

In vain conceit the Tyrant of mankind
 He reigns, the Centre of the universe,
 Claiming with impious pride unnat'ral sway.
 Hence the base Tenets (as from hell's dark gulph
 Deriv'd to man) asserting, that the Wife
 Should burst all bands of mutual offices,
 All contract, where his interest interferes;
 Should sacred right for dear dominion scorn,
 Nor to the injur'd lend a pitying ear.
 Dire, fatal doctrine! Such the baneful growth,
 The flow'rs, which Epicurus' gardens yield!
 As when th' unruly Steed once champs the curb,
 Like the wing'd arrow rapidly he flies,
 Bounding o'er hill, o'er dale, nor obvious bank
 Nor trench regards: if then the ratt'ling thong
 Or trumpet from afar resound, forthwith
 His speed he doubles, fleetier than the winds,
 The sand wide-scatt'ring with indignant hoof.
 Check'd, he rebels; the voice, the rein defies;
 'Till faint and breathless, to himself he yield,
 By headstrong fury fatally subdued.
 Thus the lascivious Wretch, his passions' slave,

Heav'ns sacred awe discarding from his breast,
 Who drowns the voice of conscience, nor attends
 Her friendly counsels, his impetuous course
 Drives, 'till exhausted by th' o'er-pow'ring rage
 Of lawless lust, all spiritless he sinks,
 Shorn of his strength, and trembling every nerve.

And sure, since Man not singly walks the earth,
 (The earth to all illimitably free,)
 To publick Good the private still should yield.
 Better that All the general bliss partake,
 Than One rejoice, while Numbers sink in woe.
 Thus each his neighbour's interest fairly weighs;
 But in our own concerns to judge aright,
 As in our neighbour's, no directing guide
 We ask, by Nature and right Reason taught.
 Lo! I exist and live; nor ought to me
 Is dearer than myself; my life I'd save,
 And crown it with what happiness I can;
 For this behoves me: what behoves, is right.
 But live not Others to themselves as dear?
 Their life too, by the self-same influence rul'd,
 Gladly they'd save, and crown that life with bliss.

Blame

Blame you in others, what yourself pursue?
 He then, his neighbour and himself between
 Who arbitrates, if justice he revere,
 Will act with equal truth, as were he judge
 'Twixt alien parties, strangers e'en by name.
 How would this righteous Arbiter proceed?
 Each not the other's property or life
 Would he permit t' invade. Himself then bound
 By the same rule he equitably owns.
 Of the great Whole himself a part he deems;
 And as the Whole it's part excels, submits
 His interest to the interest of mankind.

Thus then to every fatal vice persuades
 Unrein'd Impiety. But Religion's lore
 Restrains th' iniquitous, the upright heart
 With lively hope inspires; gives each their due;
 And man his heav'n-born mind forbids t' imbrute.
 If erst the Græcian Chiefs by Chalcas warn'd,
 Strove Dian's wrath to sooth and prosperous gales
 Obtain, with sacrifice of human blood,
 Fair Iphigenia's blood, unpitied maid;
 Here not true reverence of heav'nly Pow'r

Bore sway : the dire barbarity contriv'd
 Blind Superstition and an impious Seer,
 Yet on th' unrighteous altar, harshly doom'd
 By an ambitious Sire's relentless voice
 This beauteous, hapless victim ne'er had bled,
 But that inveigling Pleasure Paris' breast
 First fir'd with lawless love. Adulterous wretch !
 Who durst the laws of hospitality
 Profane, and Helen by inglorious theft
 To Troy, of Troy's long war the torch, convey.

But lest imagin'd Bliss thy hopes betray,
 Still joy pursuing, still avoiding pain,
 Thy soul with soft voluptuousness amus'd :
 Resolve me ; does thy every wish succeed,
 And is thy heart's desire completely crown'd ?
 Then art thou fortunate beyond compare,
 Far beyond man's allotment fortunate.
 Yet this rare boon you'll not presume t' ascribe
 To conscious Merit ; nor to Wisdom's pow'r :
 For She creates not the event of things,
 But warns to bear them, prosperous or adverse ;
 Gives not to fortune law, but to the mind

Salubrious

Salubrious precepts. But should Fate unkind
 Doom thee the trials of severer life,
 O! in what depth of misery o'erwhelm'd
 Thoult plunge; who lost in dalliance and delight
 Shrink'ft at the shadow, at the sound of pain;
 When unforeseen distress and rapid woe
 Rush on thy soul, unequal to the weight?
 Thro' luxury enervated and broke,
 Thou want'ft that firmness, which defies the slings
 Of angry fate, and buoys the constant soul
 Erect 'midst ruin, dauntless and serene.
 Nor draw'ft thou comfort or support from heav'n.
 What dread Calamities beset the man,
 Who trembles ever at impending ills,
 And pants for visionary joys, unskill'd
 To steel his mind with patient fortitude?
 As when fair blossoms first their gems unfold
 Thick o'er the blushing tree, which genial dews
 And tepid suns in spring's all-cheering prime
 Soft and serene with fostering influence rear;
 If then with furious gusts, succeeding dire
 To the mild zephyr's breeze, the Northwind bleak.

Tempest.

Tempest the night, they blast the rip'ning bloom;
Instant it sickens, languishes and dies.

Full well I ween the answer you'll return:
" Modest my wishes; no desire of gain
Inflames me; Kings I envy not their wealth
Their gorgeous palaces, or empty pomp
Of glist'ring honours, which the herd admire.
I seek not princedoms at th' expence of care,
Nor triumphs bought with hazard, toil, and blood.
But what kind Nature bounteously bestows
Unsparing I enjoy, nor blush to suck
The nectar'd honey from my Parent's breast,
And freely taste, what freely she imparts.
In Virtue's honest garb I wrap me safe;
And wish to lead in innocence my life,
While life remains, from vice and anguish free.

'Tis thus you plead. This plea let's fairly scan.
First then I'll grant your state, what you profess;
You sail serenely with auspicious gales:
Some rocks you've shun'd, not all: vast tracts perchance
Of dangerous seas, yet to be plough'd, remain;
Where many a Scylla and Charybdis lurk.

Say

Say, you have ever steer'd the safest road
 Thro' life : much peril you have then declin'd,
 Where numbers fail'd. Yet low'r the black'ning clouds :
 One tempest 'scap'd, another still succeeds.
 No certain rest : All o'er the Ocean's waves
 Must roll : All weather their allotted storms.

If then the tort'ring Lust of gold, that racks
 Each fordid Miser, if Ambition, nurs'd
 In courts and palaces ; if Thirst of fame,
 That headlong drives thro' armed hosts, thro' fire
 Undaunted Chiefs, ne'er tempted thee ; thus far
 Thou art secure : nor splendid Vassalage,
 Nor wealthy Penury shall thy peace annoy.
 But should that Bloom of youth thou now enjoy'st,
 Thy vigorous Health, the sweet Serenity
 Of tranquil life, and Blessings that suffice
 Thy not o'er-weaning heart ; should these fair Gifts
 Instant be snatch'd, at fickle fortune's will ;
 (For, like the short-liv'd flow'r, their beauty fades)
 Should dread diseases, wasteful war or fire
 Sudden surprise thee, in the flow of joy,
 Unpractis'd to endure ; or Tyrant fell

Load

Load thee with chains, in dungeon deep immur'd;
 Or should thy bosom Friend his trust betray;
 Thy dearest Wife be torn from thy embrace;
 Untimely death thy Children all at once
 Sweep off; thy spotless fame black Envy blast,
 And Calumny, sworn foe to innocence;
 How would'st thou then behave? or what avail
 Ne'er to have griev'd, ne'er sorrow known before?
 Thy cruel Stepdame Nature wouldst thou deem
 Not Parent, still soliciting her aid
 With weary cries in vain. Thy ravish'd joys
 Would ever haunt thee, an unwelcome train,
 And with severe remembrance goad thy soul;
 While inly rankling the envenom'd wound
 Exhausts thy strength, and sinks thee in despair.
 And what's the end? where terminates your shame?
 From your own Sect we've learn'd your last resource,
 All hope extinct; the noose, or fatal bowl.
 Sweet Solace this for your departed joys!
 Glorious Relief! still adding woe to woe.
 Thus, ever train'd in revels, banquets, masques,
 Strange scenes of loose delights, th' Assyrian Wretch,
 Sardanapalus,

Sardanapalus, tir'd of loathsome life,
 Rais'd his own fun'ral pile, and sacrific'd
 Himself, an impious victim, to the flames.
 This race thy Followers, Epicurus, run;
 And thus attain they their illustrious goal.

Not so, whom pure Religion's sacred aid
 Firmly sustains, Morality's best guide.
 What passes now, time's rapid stream along,
 They as the past regard, and as a dream
 Of yesterday; with equal eye survey
 Each various change of life, it's smiles or frowns.
 Nought vain or transient has the pow'r to move
 Their steady minds; nor Adverse Fortune break,
 Whom warm Prosperity could never bend.
 Tho' on the general sea that rolls mankind
 Toss'd rudely, and by partial tempests driv'n,
 Stemming undaunted the tumultuous waves
 In the mid-ocean they enjoy the port
 Thro' the glad prescience of a happier life.
 These temp'ral trifles for eternal bliss
 Freely they change; with short and easy toil
 Earning a glorious and immortal crown.

Nor can their generous Virtue be arraign'd
 Of avarice, by lucre's fordid hope
 Impell'd, or mercenary fear of shame.
 It's own chief Good Man's nature ever craves,
 Urg'd by the same innate desire to Be
 And to be Happy. This I freely grant;
 And Pleasure that chief good confess: but then
 The Pleasure from right objects must arise,
 Pure and sincere, obnoxious to no ill.
 For Man can nought but Happiness desire,
 Nought love, but what that Happiness promotes.
 Thus the same end all seek by diff'rent means:
 You, by soft blandishments that lull a while
 Your pain, and momentary joys; in which,
 As in the varying wind and fleeting wave,
 As in th' unstable sand by billows driv'n,
 Or smoke aspiring from the flaming reed,
 No sure foundation can be laid, whereon
 To build the conscious hope of solid Truth.
 They, nobly spurning all that time can raise,
 All that is less than God, affect not fame
 By gloss'd pretences and a specious scorn

Of worldly things, to win the gaping crowd,
 Like the false Cynic: nor, like Zeno's clan,
 In rigid forms and sower austerities
 Vaunt their perfection, and themselves adore:
 But mild and modest, God their only end
 In virtue seek, and God in the reward.

Would you fresh springs from purest source derive?
 You search not marshy vales, where stagnant ooze
 Or foetid slime prevail: with wiser aim
 Piercing the bowels of some flow'ry cliff
 Or herbid hilloc, where the verdant rush
 And corny reed each latent vein disclose.
 Hence the pellucid rill your labour crowns.
 Thus to fair Virtues honest Vot'ries spring
 Pure Pleasures, which the sensual never knew,
 Unstain'd with sorrow, unallay'd with pain.
 From the chaste love of this substantial Good
 Such winning charms, such sweet endearments flow,
 As You, with all your rioting excess,
 Tho' you should count an hundred years and more,
 Healthy and strong, in youth's perpetual bloom,
 Ne'er can attain; nor with that waste of time

Match the least portion of a virtuous life.
 For what they love, they constantly enjoy,
 Belov'd again : and from the pure embrace
 Enhanc'd, the mutual fondness stronger grows.
 No fear behind, no stings of conscience left :
 The nectar'd draught no bitterness attends,
 The flow'rs around the bowl no venom shed :
 Nor cloy'd, nor surfeited, with fresh delight
 Still as they quaff, the relish still improves.

If Death thou dread'st not, terror's vaunted King,
 They meet him with a nobler fortitude ;
 Death, by thee deem'd thy Beings final close,
 By them the spring of ever-during life.
 Your Hope, to be no more, absorpt and lost
 In night's eternal gloom : Their's, full of joy,
 Fraught with expectance of the great reward,
 Short pilgrimage with endless Joys o'er paid.
 Blest Hope ! itself a glorious recompence,
 A lively pledge of Immortality,
 Foretaste of Heav'n. Learn hence, what Treasure, far
 Surpassing Nature's, crowns the Just on earth ;
 Learn, that God's flock are happier here than thee.

But

But should you find, (what merits firmest Faith)
 When Death shall wrap thee in her sable shade,
 Should you then find with righteous vengeance arm'd
 That God you knew not once, or known defied,
 I shudder at the thought. Ah! Quintius, rash
 Th' Adventure; great the hazard you explore.
 Shift as you please, in every light appears
 Your state far worse than our's: What if we err?
 That error no dread punishment attends.
 One Fate then all involves; we all shall sink.
 In one vast unessential void absorpt.
 Err you? What fatal Misery ensues!
 Woe infinite!—Such perils who would prove?

Harsh and obscure these doctrines, you reply:
 Shall words, mere words persuade me to forego
 Certain fruition (whatsoever it be,
 Sufficient deem'd) for vague uncertain bliss?
 Shall I, in dread of blind futurity,
 The present quit? waste all my portion'd time
 In mad pursuit of dubious gain; the doom
 Eternal antedate, and living, die?
 I relish not the distant joys you boast,

The

The gaudy phantoms of an airy dream.

But what exhort we Quintius to dismiss?

Chains, fordid chains, that sink your servile Mind

What to despise? Vain toys, which once obtain'd

Instant you loath; then seek in novelties,

What oft has mock'd your hopes and fond desires,

Ever pursuing Something unpossess'd?

Thus rolling o'er his bed the weary Sick

Explores each part, on this side turns and that,

Quick-shifting; now lies prone; and now supine,

With eyes to heav'n uplift: no comfort found,

No rest; what pleas'd this moment, next offends:

Nor ought, his ever-varying palate craves,

Has pow'r to heal or mitigate his pain.

The big-swoln Dropsy thus with eager thirst

Pants for the draught; the draught new thirst excites.

So pass thy flitting years, the craving void

Of restless hope unsatisfied: in vain

You ply the vessel, while with dripping waste

The faithless bottom all your toil derides.

Desire still ends in torment: if intense

The flame, you die; if mild, short joys ensue.

Need

Need I relate the pangs attending love,
 The poison blended with the honey'd dews;
 Which your Lucretius, tho' reluctant, owns,
 Owns, and with sweetest melody laments?
 Would you shun Care, shun Pleasure; of Desire
 Engender'd both: whose false bewitching charms
 Allure you to the paths of Misery.
 Oft in the night's dark gloom o'er marshy grounds
 A wav'ring Fire, with unctuous vapours fed,
 Beams from afar: the Traveller o'erjoy'd
 Hails the delusive light, with eager step
 Pursues the fancied village, and elate
 With hope, deep plunges in the fatal mire.

These snares avoid: and tell me, where's the risk,
 The mighty risk in being virtuous, just,
 Wise, valiant, pious? is it so perilous
 An enterprize to dare to be a man?
 If yet you disapprove, and fictions call
 What I pronounce substantial solid truth;
 Is it not nobler, still to have in view
 A pure, immense, unvariable Good,
 Than to pursue things transient, groveling, gross;

To

To make thro' life's whole course your constant aim
 That God, from whose exhaustless fountain flows
 All you can wish ; not Fortune's casual die,
 Uncertain Atoms flutt'ring here and there,
 Pleasure's frail flow'r, on tender stem sustain'd,
 Blown yesterday, to-morrow's dawn decay'd?
 Hard task, you answer. But what bliss can Man
 Fancied, or real, free from labour, gain?
 Is not your vaunted Pleasure bought with toil?
 You know not God; you urge: that Truth t'explore
 O how important! In this grand debate
 Who is most interested, God, or you?
 Grant then, a future state obscure you deem;
 Is it more clear, no future state remains?
 If 'tis, demonstrate: that's incumbent sure,
 On him, receiv'd opinions who contests:
 Should that Hereafter come, you've much to dread.
 But nought You fear, uncertainties embrace
 For truths, and Darkness to the Light prefer:
 It charms you, Ruin charms; in misery
 That Darkness terminates: that Sleep to Death
 Is near, too near allied. Your only Health

Is to arouse you from this lethargy
 And stir the sluggish functions of your soul.
 One must be true, you'll grant. Where different paths
 This way and that the wav'ring Traveller
 Sollicit, Reason to the safest points.
 Say, were it rumor'd that a savage troop
 Of fierce Banditti in yon' spacious wood
 Prowl'd for their prey: tho' doubtful of the truth,
 Would you rush headlong on th' uncertain snare,—
 And tempt the ambuscade? Conviction clear
 Sure you'd demand.—Yet here, thou wanton Youth,
 Far heavier Perils wait thy dread Neglect.

Hence, 'till fair Truth's expanding beams dispel
 The mists of Error, one important Point
 Is evidently clear; how dire the scheme
 How fraught with dang'rous wiles, that from the mind
 Of man would rase th' impression of a God:
 What lively Comfort cheers, what solid Hope
 Sustains the Just, whose hearts to heav'n aspire,
 Who nobly pant for everlasting Bliss.

Is to arouse you from this lethargy
 And lift the sluggish functions of your soul
 One must be true, you'll grant. Where different paths
 This way and that the wayning traveller
 Solicit, Reason to the false points
 Say, were it tumour'd that a savage troop

ERRATA.

PAGE	10,	line 10,	for <i>your's</i> read <i>thine</i> .
—	15,	—	7, read <i>debase</i> .
—	16,	—	18, for <i>the effect</i> , read <i>th' effect</i> .
—	24,	—	7, read <i>iron or massy gold</i> .
—	27,	—	11, for <i>bateful</i> , read <i>painful</i> .
—	—	—	21, for <i>Dire insolence</i> , read <i>Rude Insolence</i> .
—	30,	—	18, after <i>deem</i> , a Semicolon.
—	39,	—	20, read <i>sublimity</i> .
—	44,	—	2, for a <i>Comma</i> , a <i>full point</i> .
—	51,	—	14, for <i>Virtues</i> , read <i>Virtue</i> .
—	54,	—	3, after <i>mind</i> , a <i>full point</i> .

Is evidently clear; how dire the scheme
 How fraught with dangerous wiles, that from the mind
 Of man would raise the impression of a God:
 What lively comfort cheers, what solid hope
 Sustain the just, whose hearts to heav'n aspire,
 Who nobly part for everlasting bliss.